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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KHARTOUM 001559

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR A/S FRAZER, S/E WILLIAMSON, AND AF/SPG  
NSC FOR PITTMAN AND HUDSON  
ADDIS ABABA FOR USAU

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TAGS: [ASEC](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KPKO](#) [UN](#) [AU](#) [SU](#)  
SUBJECT: "THEY WANT TO CANCEL SOMETHING CALLED THE DPA"  
MINNAWI TELLS CDA

REF: A. KHARTOUM 1551  
[1](#)B. KHARTOUM 1530  
[1](#)C. KHARTOUM 1528

Classified By: CDA Alberto M.Fernandez, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: Minni Minnawi reported that since returning to Khartoum he has seen no progress on VP Taha's September 2008 commitments to implement the Darfur Peace Agreement's (DPA), and cast the Sudan People's Initiative (SPI) as a distraction from the NCP's unfulfilled commitments on the DPA. Preparing for an imminent return to Darfur, Minnawi predicted that no rebel groups would participate in the SPI and was dismissive of VP Taha, questioning both his motives and his authority within the NCP. Minnawi claimed that President Bashir continues to deny the need for a political solution in Darfur. However Minnawi, as chair of the SPI's reconciliation committee, said he pressed for disarmament as a primary objective necessary to obtain reconciliation and will make additional efforts in the next few days to urge DPA implementation by the NCP. End summary.

[1](#)2. (C) Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) leader and Senior Assistant to the President Minni Minnawi told CDA Fernandez October 21 that the National Congress Party (NCP) has taken no steps to implement the DPA confidence building measures agreed to by VP Ali Osman Taha in El Fasher in September. Of the 23 points agreed upon, Minnawi said that "so far, nothing" has happened on the four most salient points: no funds have been allocated to the Darfur Reconstruction and Development Fund, a step due to have been completed by October 1; no minister at the federal level has been appointed from SLM, due October 8; no SLM member has been appointed minister in the local government of West Darfur, due October 8; and 30 million Sudanese pounds have not been deposited into the budget of the compensation commission, due October 24. Minnawi said he intended to meet with VP Taha and President Bashir later that day to discuss the measures further, but remained suspicious of the true intentions behind the Sudan People's Initiative. "They want to cancel something called the DPA," Minnawi told CDA. "They want to use the Sudan People's Initiative to cancel the DPA," substituting one unfulfilled agreement with the possibility of another, vaguer accord with rebel leaders Khalil Ibrahim and Abdel Wahid al-Nur.

[1](#)3. (C) Appointed head of the SPI's reconciliation committee, Minnawi said he was disappointed with NCP rhetoric during the committee's first meeting. When one speaker attempted to address the "illusion" that Darfur was an Arab country and a Zaghawa country, Minnawi reported that President Omar al-Bashir interjected, saying the Zaghawa tribe truly does have a plan to take over Darfur, claiming "we have the

documents!" Bashir reportedly insisted that Darfur's problem was not political at all, but was related to mere conflicts over tribal affiliations and resource allocation. Minnawi said he countered Bashir's stance, saying that the NCP has politicized pre-existing tribal conflicts to exacerbate the situation in Darfur. Told by the President that the rebel movements should be disarmed, Minnawi said he told Bashir that the rebel movements would be wise to disarm only when and if the government has fully disarmed the janjaweed and other Arab militias. Following a session with Presidential Assistant Nafi Ali Nafi and the President, Minnawi said he had concluded, "They don't have the clear willingness to solve Darfur."

14. (C) (Note: Protest marches at IDP camps in North Darfur on October 20 echoed Minnawi's concerns about the SPI. Internally displaced persons (IDPs) at Abu Shouk and Al Salaam IDP camps marched between the two camps with banners reading, "Security is the first demand of the IDPs;" "Disarmament of janjaweed before launching any initiative;" and "War criminals should be brought to justice immediately." IDPs also protested that they had not been invited to the SPI conference in Kenana. Senior Fur community leaders in the camps estimated that 37,000 people participated in the three-hour non-violent march, which seems slightly exaggerated given that this would comprise half the population of each camp. End note)

15. (C) When asked by CDA if rebel leaders Abdul Wahid al-Nur and Khalil Ibrahim would participate in the SPI, Minnawi was doubtful, and claimed that one non-signatory rebel group (URF), including leaders such as Bahar Abu Garda and Adam

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Bakheit, had wanted to join SLM, but NCP leaders were unwilling to provide financial compensation needed for the group to join Minni (since it would strengthen his hand). Minnawi also pointed to the NCP's lack of will to implement the DPA. He noted that Darfur development funds are supposed to be divided between the state governments in Darfur and the Transitional Darfur Regional Authority (TDRA), however the government still had not transferred any money to the TDRA. President Bashir told Minni that he wanted to travel to North Darfur, to the town of Karnoi, to announce development projects to be funded by the states or by the Federal Government, cutting out the TDRA completely. Minnawi appeared irritated but resigned to the NCP's divide and rule tactics, for example by co-opting Minnawi's deputy, Dr. Rayah Mahmoud, and SLM general secretary Mustafa Tirab, to function as proxies for the NCP. Minnawi said that if the government did not fulfill any of its obligations, his stay in Khartoum would not be extended for long. "Soon I want to go back," he said, adding "I don't know what Ali Osman is thinking, maybe he is playing a game, or maybe he doesn't have the real authority."

16. (C) Comment: Minnawi's pessimistic view of proceedings in Kenana is the most negative we have heard thus far, not surprising given his bitter experience with the NCP. Sitting in a darkened room, chain-smoking and waiting for the vice president to call him, a jaded Minnawi had the look of a man fooled twice by the NCP - first by the DPA, and then again by Taha's September agreement, but eager to show that his forces still have teeth. Minnawi is still trapped by the DPA - no longer a rebel but not a true member of the GNU, Minnawi likely felt compelled to attend the SPI to remain relevant, give peace still another chance, and avoid being cut out of a potentially fruitful process. If his report of Bashir's views is accurate, the SPI will be a very hard deal to sell, no matter how much money the Qataris want to throw at it. In the coming days post will provide additional perspectives on the proceedings in Kenana and early planning for Doha.  
FERNANDEZ